

# **An Extraordinary Place to Learn**

*We know that good educational experiences can change a child's life. 4-H combines an imaginative, motivational learning environment with outstanding curriculum. We must use our scholarship and practice in the field of experiential learning to revolutionize the ways youth build confidence and master critical life skills in all 4-H activities.*

## **Goal 1:**

**4-H Youth development will strengthen the relationship between research and practice using the resources of land-grant and other university systems.**

*Georgia*

## **AGRICULTURAL AWARENESS**

### **Situation:**

4-H'ers from Toombs and Bacon County need to become aware of the economic impact of blueberries in our area. The nutritional value of blueberries is becoming more and more important, and research statistics have proven that blueberries benefit the body as part of a healthy diet.

### **Program Description:**

A day long program was developed to allow the participants to learn about the wonderful world of the little "blues". The content of the program included economic impact, nutritional value, and actual hands-on learning of the picking and packing industry. The Blueberry Picking, Packing, and Snacking class began at the Bacon County Extension Service where the participants enjoyed eating blueberry muffins and meeting each other. Each participant was asked to introduce him/herself to a participant from another county. Then each one had to introduce their partner to the group at large.

Following all introductions, the participants were given a pre-test on their knowledge of the blueberry industry. Then they learned about the history of the blueberries in Georgia through a presentation given by the 4-H Extension Agent. They also learned about the nutritional value as well as the economic impact the little "blues" have on Bacon County and Georgia.

The group then traveled by bus to a local blueberry field where they were lead by Master 4-H'er, Bryan Wade. He discussed the various varieties of berries grown in the field and explained how the berries were irrigated, picked and loaded. All participants then climbed aboard the picking machine and rode while the field crew went through the process of picking "a round." While the truck was being loaded, the group was given the opportunity to hand pick as many berries as they could eat.

Following the excursion in the field, it was time to eat lunch. The 4-H'ers returned to the Extension Office where they had lunch and enjoyed ice cream with blueberry topping. After lunch, the 4-H'ers were divided into two groups and competed in a game of "Blueberry Jeopardy", answering questions about what they had learned during the morning activities. The winning group was given blueberry flavored candy canes as a prize.

Next, the group was taken by bus out to a packing plant owned and operated by Lane and Sharon Wade, Alma Nursery and Berry Farm. All the participants were instructed on the importance of “suiting up” in the proper garments before entering the packing plant. This suit included a hairnet and an apron along with cleaning their hands with bleach water. These instructions were given by a HASSOP Compliance Officer and 4-H’er, Ashley Davis.

Upon entering the plant, the 4-H’ers were then given the chance to try their hand at making several blueberry packing boxes. Then it was on to the conveyor belt and the grading process. The employees of the plant gave the children a quick lesson on what to look for in the best berries and how to discard bad berries. Then it was time for the 4-H’ers to get to work. All participants graded berries. They were also shown how the machine packs the graded berries in the plastic cartons and how the employees pack these cartons into cardboard boxes like the 4-H’ers had made earlier.

Mr. Wade also explained the difference between the fresh and frozen blueberry packing lines. He demonstrated the new color sorter that was used on the wet line (blueberries that are packed for freezing.) The color sorter actually “saw” the color of berries and discarded every berry that was not blue. After the tour of the plant, the group was taken back to the Extension Office for a final evaluation and snack.

#### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

There were twenty 4-H’ers from Bacon and Toombs Counties who participated in the day’s activities. The 4-H’ers had a great time trying their hand at packing, grading, and making boxes. They all agreed that they would like to come back to the packing plant and maybe even try to work there when they got old enough. The employees and owners of Alma Nursery and Berry Farm were glad we brought the students and asked that we do it again.

#### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

At the close of the program, participants were given a post-test to compare their scores against the pre-test given earlier in the day. All participants showed increased knowledge. The percent of improvement in knowledge ranged from 33% to 1050%. The average overall percentage of improvement was 158%. Thirteen of the participants rated the blueberry packing shed as their favorite part of the program, while three rated riding the blueberry picker as their favorite and two selected the farm as the best part of the program. All but one of the participants said they would like to have a summer job working in the blueberry plant.

#### **Resource Commitment:**

The charge to participants was \$3 to cover the cost of food prepared during the day.

#### **Collaborators:**

Toombs County Extension Service  
Alma Nursery and Berry Farm  
Bacon County Board of Education for use of bus  
Roy King, Volunteer Bus Driver

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**Base Program:**  
4-H Youth Development

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*Maryland*

## **Safe Kids Day**

**Situation:**

According to safety surveys conducted throughout Somerset County, MD there is a very strong need for educational programs that directly inform the public about seat belt and bicycle safety. The Somerset County Highway Safety Office and the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Office have provided numerous educational programs to youth in school settings. These organizations wanted to provide a mode of outreach to parents and other family members so that they too would also have an understanding of the importance of protecting our children.

**Program Description:**

Safe Kids Day was established to include safety components such as bicycle safety, vehicular safety, water safety, fire prevention, substance abuse prevention and domestic violence prevention. The program is designed to provide safety education to youth and families throughout the county by promoting unity between families and community members, teaching participants to make safety a part of their every day life, providing participants knowledge to gain skills in personal safety and safety related to home environment. This program is also concerned with strengthening youth's understanding of the importance of good health and safe and healthy life styles.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

The targeted youth where second graders who had participated in safety and health related courses throughout the school year these youth received five forty-five minute lessons prior to the Safe Kids Program. The course consisted of pedestrian, seat belt, bicycle, household, and food safety. All of the evaluations from the youth and their teachers were outstanding the youth also received detailed information to take home and share with their families.

**Accomplishments Impacts:**

After the Safe Kids Program the percentage of youth wearing helmets has increased twenty percent and the number of youth wearing safety belts has increased forty-two percent. The local police agencies have reported a decline in the number of safety belt violations and accidents throughout the county. The Maryland Cooperative Extension and the Somerset County Highway Safety have received numerous letters from school children explaining how they feel that these programs have increase safety awareness in their families. Teachers have reported that the youth in their classrooms have a much deeper understanding of ways to be safe. The educators also explained that they now feel that they know what agencies can be contacted for reference materials in their classrooms.

**Resource Commitment:**

The Somerset County Highway safety provided a great deal of support for the program from funds generated by that program's in house grants. Other funds came from the agencies that participated in the programs.

**Collaborators:**

Somerset County Highway Safety  
University of Maryland Cooperative Extension, 4-H  
Somerset County Board of Education  
After school Opportunity Program  
Millsboro Fire Department  
Sysco Foods  
Somerset County Sheriff's Department  
Crisfield Police Department  
Princess Anne Police Department  
R.E.A.L.I.T.Y.  
D.A.R.E  
Natural Resources Police  
Somerset County Health Department  
Healthy Families  
M.A.D.D.  
Costen Dance Group  
Ambulance Squad  
Department of Emergency Services  
WBEY Radio

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**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

Nutrition, Diet and Health  
4-H Youth Development  
Family Development & Resource Management

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*Missouri*

## **Missouri 4-H Impact Study**

**Situation:**

Funding agencies, foundations, government entities, and private partners have charged youth-serving agencies to document positive impacts of the programs they support. In general, they want to do know that these programs are making a difference in the lives of young people. The Missouri 4-H Youth Development Program has nearly a century -long rich history of positive youth development educational activities designed to develop young people into capable, caring and contributing members of society. However, a coordinated state-wide assessment of the

impact of the 4-H program on members had never been conducted. Nationally, a similar study was underway. Missouri felt it timely and worthy to replicate the national 4-H impact study in Missouri.

### **Program Description:**

Resources were secured from University Outreach and Extension for the state-wide study. In March of 1999, a team of state and field faculty under the leadership of Dr. Jo Turner, attended the kickoff for the national data collection phase in Kansas City, Missouri. This team determined that the first iteration of the project in Missouri would focus on collecting data from 4-H club participants in grades 4<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>. 4-H participants from other delivery modes (e.g., school enrichment) would be conducted in subsequent years.

During 2000, Missouri 4-H Youth Development field faculty gathered data on the perception about the benefits of 4-H from youth and adults associated with 4-H Youth Development programs. The state study paralleled a national study and used the same sampling technique and instruments. The questionnaires were divided into six components related to the critical elements of a 4-H experience: Adults in 4-H, Feelings about 4-H, Learning about 4-H, Helping Others, Planning and Decision Making in 4-H and Belonging in 4-H. The questionnaires also included questions about length and breadth of 4-H involvement, demographic information and an open-ended question, "How has 4-H changed your life?"

### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

Twenty-seven field faculty of targeted sample counties spent .02 FTE collecting data. An additional 17 field faculty from non-sample counties felt the information was valuable that they spent .02 FTE collecting data as well. About 1.0 FTE of field faculty time was spent in collecting data. An additional 0.2 FTE was spent by a state faculty member overseeing the project.

### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

Returned surveys from a total of 1,685 youth and 1,162 adults showed a very positive view of 4-H (Mean = 25.98; S.D = 3.69; Range 11 - 32). Youth felt that they learned to help others (Mean= 19.48; S.D. = 3.69; Range 6 - 24) and that they belonged in 4-H (Mean =29.41; S.D. 4.4; Range 9 - 36). 4-H also helped youth building relationships with caring adults (Mean = 28.12; S.D. = 4.1; Range 9 - 36), learn how to plan and make decisions (Mean = 19; S.D. 3.2; Range 6 - 24) and learned new things (Mean 18.76; S.D. = 2.97; Range 6 - 24).

Adults mirrored the youths positive view of 4-H (Mean = 25.88; S.D. = 2.85; Range 14 - 32). Adults believed that members learned how to help others (Mean = 20.20; S.D. 2.73; Range 6 - 24) and that they felt that they belonged in 4-H (Mean 29.22; S.D. =3.52; Range 9 - 36). 4-H taught kids to work with caring adults (Mean = 28.65; S.D. = 3.27; Range 15 - 36); to plan (Mean = 19.22; S.D. = 2.59; Range 6 - 24) and learn new things (Mean = 19.31; S.D. = 2.32; Range 14 - 32)

In general,

- Both youth and adults felt very positive about 4-H.
- Youth had a strong sense of helping others and a sense of belonging in 4-H
- Youth and adults built working and caring partnerships
- Adults were more glowing than youth in their responses.

- There is room for improvement in the area of shared leadership
- Early adolescents (8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders) need to be tapped for leadership
- 4-H dropouts may be due in part by "best friends" not being involved.
- Youth living with grandparents may need extra help to successfully participate
- Get Clover Kids involved early in the program year

Written Comments of youth ---

"4-H has made my life different because it has taught me to be a leader and stand up for what for I believe in. It taught me that what is cool isn't always right, and what is right isn't always cool. I, also, through the years, have gained respect for others."

"4-H has changed me because when I started, I could not talk in front of people. I couldn't tell them what my ideas were. Six years later, I've been vice-president and now I'm president of 4-H and student council at school. I can tell anyone my idea, and do anything."

A 4-H parent writes ----

"It has provided us with a group of people who enjoy the same activities with their children as we do. We see definite growth in their ability to handle responsibility and see them emerging with leadership skills that will help them as adults. Thanks."

#### **Resources Commitment:**

University Outreach and Extension provided over \$6,000 in support conduct the study, analyze the results and publish the findings.

#### **Collaborators:**

4-H members, 4-H volunteers, 4-H field and state faculty, UOE Administration.

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#### **Base Program:**

4-H Youth Development

*Mississippi*

## **Health Rocks!**

#### **Program Description:**

*Health Rocks!* is a project for 8 to 12 year olds developed by the National 4-H Council offered through Mississippi State University. The program works on the principle that if youth are given the opportunity to develop positive life skills they will be more unlikely to give into peer pressure to use tobacco and drugs. Unique features of this teaching model include teen trainers and a strong youth/adult partnership model.

This is the third year of the *Health Rocks!* program involving the 4-H Department at Mississippi State University. The training team is called a “virtual faculty” and is built on a strong youth/adult partnership. The team consists of fourteen youth from Mississippi and adults from Mississippi State University, Alcorn State University, University of New Hampshire, Ohio State University and Utah State University. The team is diverse in interest and ethnicity.

### **Program Impact**

During 2001-2002, 36 demonstration sites were selected to continue the pilot testing of the program. Each site brought unique and diverse demographics ranging from rural to inner city. Youth participants in the project were also very diverse. The demonstration sites were located in 21 states. A total of 6,257 youth have been reported as having participated in the project.

Mississippi State University Extension Service is involved in a research component of this project that will explore the impact of the role and responsibilities on the teen trainers as measured by leadership skills gained and a self-esteem index. The research instruments have been refined and the preliminary data is being processed.

### **Keys to Success**

A web-based reporting system has been critical to the accumulation of numeric data. A comment section in the reporting system has also allowed the collection of success stories from the sites.

Strengths as reported from the project participants included the strong peer mentorship component. This included teens as teachers and role models. The decision-making skills gained by the youth participants also added strength to the learning experiences. Each lesson in the curriculum was based on a life-skill model.

Delivery systems also varied. The *Health Rocks!* program was held in after-school settings, community-based clubs from a variety of youth serving organizations ranging from 4-H Clubs to Boys and Girls Clubs to juvenile justice programs, and in day and summer camping programs.

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### **Base Programs:**

4-H Youth Development

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*New Hampshire*

## **Up, Up and Away with 4-H Space Day!**

### **Situation:**

The University of New Hampshire is unique in its designation as a Land, Sea and Space Grant institution. While University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension has traditionally maintained a strong relationship with the Land and Sea Grant status of the University, outreach

programs in the area of space education have often occurred separately from UNH Cooperative Extension.

Further, 4-H Youth Development programs in New Hampshire have traditionally been strong in animal and family and consumer sciences, mirroring the demographics of the rural and farm population of the state. Increasing numbers of youth in suburban and urban areas requires the New Hampshire 4-H program to expand in the area of Science and Technology and other areas that are of greater interest to youth today.

### **Program Description:**

More than seventy youth and adults visited the UNH Space Science Center on March 9, 2002 to learn about space and see, first hand, some of the fascinating research projects that are going on at UNH.

Space Science faculty and graduate students presented three different workshops. The youth were split into three separate age groups, so presenters were able to tailor the presentations to the appropriate age group. One faculty member shared some spectacular video footage of the sun's surface and she talked about some of the UNH research projects that have traveled on Space Shuttle missions. Another faculty member and his students lead a tour of the Geographic Information Systems and Remote Sensing Laboratory. Participants studied maps and posters and were surprised at how detailed the maps were. A third faculty member explained what Gamma Rays are and how studying them can tell us a lot about the conditions of space and the earth.

All youth participants were involved in a simulated Space Shuttle mission that required team work, effective communication and knowledge about space to complete, while the adult participants were introduced to 4-H's CCS Aerospace Project curriculum.

### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

All participants indicated a high level of interest in the topics and satisfaction in the program when surveyed at the end of the day. The youth were engaged though out the day and enthusiastically participated in a simulated space shuttle mission at the conclusion of the workshop.

Parents who completed a follow up survey were very pleased with the opportunity to visit the University of New Hampshire campus with their children and learn about science in a very hands-on manner. One parent said, *"I greatly appreciate the opportunity to expose my children to 'real science'"*.

### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

All participants said they learned something new about space and about what it means for the University of New Hampshire to be a Space Grant University.

*"I had no idea that UNH even had an involvement in the Space Program, but to get to meet and talk to such fascinating people who are directly involved was a rare opportunity."*

When asked to share one thing they had learned during the day, youth responded very thoughtfully. They cited things like, how to make a digital map, that the sun makes big



explosions, how a gamma ray telescope works and that it is not easy to get ready to do something in an astronaut suit!

A parent took the time to send an email two days after the event to say, "*...I think we'll find that the information they (her children) learned planted seeds that will show for many years to come. We've already discussed much of what we saw and they've been on the web looking for more information.*"

One of the faculty presenters shared that he enjoyed talking to the youth as he felt it forced him to think about the work he does in a different, more practical manner. Presenters were impressed with the thoughtful questions the youth asked as well.

The success of this program has strengthened UNH Cooperative Extension's relationship with the Space Science Center's outreach program and future collaborations are already being planned.

**Resource Commitment:**

The 4-H Foundation of New Hampshire graciously donated \$840 toward the cost of lunch, curriculum and materials for all participants. A small registration fee (\$15 per family) was charged as well to offset any additional costs. The UNH Space Science Center provided the workshop presenters and facilities at no cost to 4-H.

**Collaborators:**

The University of New Hampshire Space Science Center and the 4-H Foundation of New Hampshire

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**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

4-H Youth Development

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*New Jersey*

## **NJ 4-H Science Discovery Series**

**Situation:**

Science is naturally-occurring and, yet, often goes unnoticed outside the classroom. The NJ 4-H Science Discovery Series was created to help youth develop life skills while discovering the science of the world around them. Making science fun is the goal of the lessons and activities included in this curriculum aimed at teaching youth in grades 2-10. Whereas Volume 1 focused on basic science exploration, Volume 2 provides more in-depth coverage to six different science topics. Extension/4-H staff, youth group leaders, school teachers, youth center staff, camp

counselors, 4-H club leaders, and other educators have found that the lessons contained in these guides are as fun and interesting to teach as they are for youth to experience and learn.

**Program Description:**

Volume 2 of the curriculum covers the following topics, which resulted from a needs assessment conducted with 4-H staff, volunteers, teachers, and other educators:

- Weatherwise (Meteorology)
- What Is That Tree I See? (Leaf & tree identification)
- Spiderrific (Spiders)
- Mountains High, Oceans Deep (Oceanography)
- Exploring Planet X (Space exploration)
- Where Does Your Garbage Go? (Waste management alternatives & environmental conservation)

Supplemental information and resources are provided using a companion Science Discovery Series web site at <http://discoverscience.rutgers.edu>. In the past year it has received 112,798 hits during 13,398 total visits, including those by 4,226 unique visitors. A separate 4-H staff web site was developed as a source for support materials, including news releases, newsletter articles, promotional flyers, and instructions.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

Because of widespread interest in Volume 1 of the Science Discovery Series and its accompanying Science Discovery Kits, Volume 2 was created. Since the curriculum was intended to be used by a variety of audiences, it has received the favorable attention of numerous state, regional, and national organizations.

**Accomplishments and Impacts:**

The "NJ 4-H Science Discovery Series Evaluation" was used to acquire evaluative information from group leaders during pilot testing. The information has been used to help determine the value of the lessons and activities contained in each unit, and for reporting purposes. The evaluation can also be completed on the Science Discovery Series web site. Some findings of pilot testing of Volume 2 were:

- 18 hours of instruction were provided using all units of Volume 2 to 114 youth in 9 groups, grades 3-9. Youth were in school enrichment and after school programs, including a community juvenile justice program; taught by both teachers and volunteers.
- 100% said the unit taught was Very Effective or Effective in meeting its objectives and Very Easy or Easy to teach. 100% of users said the unit taught was Very Effective or Effective in helping youth develop science/math literacy and life skills, and all would recommend the unit to others for teaching science to youth.
- Typical comments included: "Grade appropriate," "Interesting and exciting activities," "Lesson plans were user friendly for teacher," "The unit was self-explanatory and very easy to understand and teach," "Great!"
- Since pilot testing, the curriculum has been used with hundreds of other youth in N.J. and elsewhere, with similar results found.

**Resource Commitment:**

A \$1,500 grant from the NJ 4-H Development Fund assisted with development and pilot testing costs. The Science Discovery Series is self-sustaining through purchases by users to cover

printing costs. An accompanying web site was developed to support the curriculum by providing educators with additional resources and links.

**Collaborators:**

The development team consisted of Keith G. Diem, Ph.D.; Rebecca Gardner; Betty Jean Jesuncosky; Anna Matteoda, Ph.D.; Kevin Mitchell; James Nichnadowicz; Jeannette Rea-Keywood; and Lisa Rothenburger. In addition, numerous experts served as reviewers for subject matter accuracy.

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**Base program area(s) to which program applies:**

4-H Youth Development

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*New York*

## **Cooking Up Fun!**

**Situation:**

Many food and nutrition experiences for youth emphasize nutrition knowledge and awareness of healthy eating practices, rather than independent food skills. Today's youth lack opportunities to learn and practice basic food selection, handling, and preparation skills. In addition, few nutrition programs engage youth in planning the learning experience and evaluating skill mastery. Empowering youth with basic food skills in the context of positive youth development will contribute to the capacity of individuals and families, especially those with limited resources, to improve their diets, health, and quality of life.

**Program Description:**

*Cooking Up Fun!* provides youth ages 9 to 12 the opportunity to gain independent food skills. The teaching, training, and evaluation tools integrate the educational goals of promoting healthy food practices and positive youth development. Adults work with small groups of youth (5 to 6 youth per adult), allowing each participant to create his/her own workstation to prepare recipes. Adults facilitate the learning experience by engaging youth in planning the cooking sessions; by creating conversation about food and the cooking process; and by providing the time, space, and encouragement to master food skills.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) staff in seven counties participated in a 2002 pilot project to develop additional evaluation tools for *Cooking Up Fun!* A total of 150 youth participated in 18 'cooking clubs.' Several new community collaborations were created, especially reaching new audiences of youth from low-income families. The program created new opportunities to integrate training and interaction among 4-H Youth Development and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education/Food Stamp Nutrition Education programs. All of the adult facilitators rated the program highly.

An Urban 4-H Program Manager stated: “*Cooking Up Fun* was without a doubt one of the most successful outreach efforts to come to West Village. *Cooking Up Fun* ... superceded our expectations in terms of superior organization, capable staff, and interesting program delivery that kept youth involved, interested, and asking for more.” A director of a community program targeting at-risk girls said: “The youth gained *significant* cooking skills. In the beginning they didn’t know how to do much of anything by themselves and, by the end, all I did was unload the groceries.” An EFNEP paraprofessional explained: “I worked with an energetic group of girls who were not very focused in the beginning. They were not friends and did not have much stability in their lives. After just two sessions they were working together, sitting down to eat together, and at the end of the 6 weeks they wrote a letter begging the school enrichment coordinator to let them continue the cooking club.”

### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

Several evaluation tools were developed to assess the nutrition and youth development impact of *Cooking Up Fun!* programs. Forms completed by youth participants included: About Me and More About Me (pre/post food skill behavior and attitude); About Food and More About Food (pre/post nutrition knowledge); My Chef Skills (pre/post food skill mastery); About Today’s Session (food skill mastery and youth development). A Kitchen Chatter Pad was used to collect additional comments from youth. The adults reported their perceptions of improvement in both food skills and youth development indicators on Facilitator Notes forms (group data). Group and individual interviews with adult facilitators provided additional data. Preliminary data from the Spring 2002 *Cooking Up Fun!* evaluation project indicate that youth who participated in 4 to 6 sessions of a *Cooking Up Fun!* cooking club gained confidence and mastery of food skills. Comments collected from youth indicated that the sessions were fun and meaningful.

The “About Today’s Session” form was completed at each session by each youth participant to assess his/her cooking experience. A total of 550 forms were completed, across all sites, all youth, and all sessions. Of the total self-assessments: 75% rated the session *Great*; 71% learned a new cooking skill; 70% improved a cooking skill; 68% intended to make the recipe again; 63% had not made the recipe before the session; 62% could teach a friend to make the recipe.

At the last cooking club session youth completed the More About Me form. From 83 completed forms, youth gave these responses to two open-ended statements:

- A cooking skill that I can do better is: \_\_\_\_\_  
18% said “measuring;” 13% said “cutting with knives;” 22% said one of several different cooking skills (kneading, cracking eggs, grating cheese, peeling, using the oven, washing dishes, following instructions, listening, reading food labels)
- The best part of the Cooking Club was: \_\_\_\_\_  
35% said “cooking;” 35% said “eating the food;” and 25% provided additional responses (everything, being with friends, having fun, learning new things, games, getting chef hats, cutting with knives, making scones {or other recipe name}).

A second pilot project will be conducted September 2002 to June 2003 to further develop evaluation tools and assess nutrition and youth development impact of a 9-month cooking club in selected after school programs.

### **Resource Commitment:**

New York State 4-H Foundation - \$2100

**Collaborators:**

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) 4-H Youth Development and Nutrition staff in seven counties who in turn collaborated with 14 community programs (school-age child care, school enrichment, Prevention Focus, Food Bank of Western New York); New York State 4-H Foundation

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**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

4-H Youth Development  
Nutrition, Diet, & Health

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*Ohio*

## **Read and Succeed**

**Situation:**

34% of all 4th grade students in Hancock County are reading below grade level. Assessments show that a comparable percentage of students are struggling with reading in kindergarten through third grade. Teachers alone cannot solve the reading crisis and No Child Should Be Left Behind! The community must step forth and assist!

**Program Description:**

The Read and Succeed Program in Hancock County was planned and coordinated by the university coordinator, curriculum specialists and educators. Scientifically based researched curriculum materials were used for the program design and were modified for volunteer training. The Guided Reading structure designed by Gay Sue Pinnell of Ohio State University and Irene Fontas of Lesley College was the resource used for the framework of the Read and Succeed Program. By using this design that was offered by a land-grant institution and expanding on it, we were able to design a Best Practice for using volunteers to effectively tutor students.

Volunteers were recruited and took part in ten hours of training to prepare them to mentor struggling readers. Tutors visited the school classrooms one day each week to individually mentor 3-4 children for 20-30 minutes each. A leader in each school building recruited and scheduled the mentors with the teachers. Literacy specialists conducted the countywide training and quality children's literature and literacy materials were leveled according to reading ability and placed in all school buildings.

In the 2001-2002 school year, 257 trained community mentors tutored 1089 children. 36 of these mentors were high school students who volunteered during a study hall or after school.

The teens also received the ten hours of training and assisted with 4-H Junior Leadership and Cloverbud meetings

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

1.15 FTEs were committed to the project. The target audience (struggling readers) received 17 hours of individual reading assistance from their mentors. The tutoring lessons were designed to change a child's attitude toward reading since most of the students do not choose to read. Mentors do this by offering the students literature that is written at the child's reading level rather than at their grade in order to build on reading strengths to build confidence in reading and address literacy weaknesses. This is the fourth year for the Read and Succeed program in our county and 82% of the mentors are returning for a second, third or fourth year!

Mentors felt positive about their experiences because the training allowed them to achieve success with the students. Not only were they valued as a positive role model for the children but also their young friends warmly greeted them because reading with the tutors was fun!

**Accomplishments and Impacts:**

The reading attitudes of 67% of the students improved more than 15% over the course of the school year. Trained mentors became excited about reading to and with children and encouraged others to mentor also. Our trained mentor base is increasing and to date, we have 426 mentors who are fully trained in our community. We find that literacy teaching is extending into churches, organizations and homes.

The Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation wanted to guarantee that dollars would be available to continue literacy programming even if state dollars are no longer available. For this reason, the HancockREADS initiative was adopted by the Foundation to raise dollars for an endowment fund to continue literacy funding. The goal of HancockREADS is to raise \$3 million in five years to support the project and the Foundation Board has pledged \$150,000 matching funds to encourage the efforts. The local coordinator of Read and Succeed is a member of a six-person HancockREADS advisory board. Since March, when the initiative was announced, over \$17,000 has been raised and one literacy grant has been awarded.

**Resource Commitment:**

\$1,216,000.00 was generated from State of Ohio grant funding

\$5,600.00 was donated by local agencies

**Collaborators:**

Dr. Ryan Schmiesing- Interim Leader, Program & Volunteer Risk Management, OSU Extension

Kim Reinhart-Clark-Curriculum Supervisor, Hancock County Educational Service Center

Dave Rossman-Curriculum Supervisor, Findlay City Schools

Barbara Deerhake-Director, Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation

Findlay Service League

Sixteen elementary and intermediate principals

Eight school district superintendent and treasurers

179 classroom teachers

**Contact Person(s):**

Sue Arnold; Program Coordinator, Literacy; Ohio State University Extension,

7868 CR 140-Suite B; Findlay, OH 45840, Phone: 419-422-3851; Fax: 419-422-3866;  
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**Base Program areas to which the program applies:**

4-H Youth Development  
Leadership & Volunteer Development  
Family Development & Resource Management  
Community Resource and Economic Development

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*Oklahoma*

## **Pork Quality Assurance Certification for Youth Swine Exhibitors**

**Situation:**

Major pork processing plants have mandatory PQA requirements for swine they process. All pork producers are required to have been trained in Pork Quality Assurance training Level III to be able to sell market hogs to the major packing plants. For youth exhibitors to sell their hogs to major packing plants, all market hogs needed to come from certified Level III owners.

**Program Description:**

The National Pork Board developed materials for Pork Quality Assurance Training for Youth. The youth PQA program focuses on avoiding misuse of drugs and feed additives to produce a safe wholesome pork product for consumers. To show at the two state fairs in the fall or the spring livestock show, exhibitors must attend a certification course.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

Oklahoma 4-H Educators and Agricultural Education Instructors (FFA Advisors) were trained with assistance from the National Pork Board and the Oklahoma Pork Council as Pork Quality Assurance trainers Level IX. This allows them to train and certify pork producers in the state including students who show and sell market hogs. Six training sessions have been held for over 500 Extension and Agriculture Educators who in turn have provided training sessions for youth and often their parents as well. In addition a Web based training site was established for ongoing training of youth. This site was established in an effort to allow access to training regardless of location.

**Accomplishments and Impacts(s):**

Over 10,000 market hogs are fed annually by Oklahoma 4-H and FFA members and then are sold as a consumer product. The value of these animals at slaughter totals over \$1,000,000.00 per year. In addition, these youth will continue to be involved in some aspect of agriculture, possibly as producers, but certainly as consumers, for the rest of their life. Over 6,000 youth received certification at PQA Level III from Fall 2000 through February 2002. The training students receive on the 10 "good management practices" will allow them to improve swine management and promote food safety. PQA Level III training provides certification for a two-year period. Youth continuing to raise market hogs will need to be re-certified.

**Resources Committed:**

All county Extension staff with agriculture and/or 4-H responsibility were required to attend the initial training sessions. Likewise, AgEd instructors were also provided training during their annual conference. This was a significant contribution in staff development time. Educators have then planned and conducted at least one training session annually, with most providing a minimum or two training sessions per year.

**Collaborators:**

National Pork Board  
Oklahoma Pork Council  
Oklahoma Career Technology, Agricultural Education Division  
Tulsa State Fair  
Oklahoma Youth Expo

**Web Sites Resources:**

[www.agweb.okstate.edu/fourh/PQA/youth.htm](http://www.agweb.okstate.edu/fourh/PQA/youth.htm)  
[www.agweb.okstate.edu/fourh/PQA/exted.htm](http://www.agweb.okstate.edu/fourh/PQA/exted.htm)  
[www.porkboard.org/PQA/default.asp](http://www.porkboard.org/PQA/default.asp)  
[www.okpork.org](http://www.okpork.org)

**Additional Resources:**

PQA Youth Program Book and CD-ROM are available by calling the PQA Department **(515) 223-2600**

\*Similar programs are being conducted in other states, however there is not a multi-state effort between those state Extension programs at this point in time.

**Contact:**

Dr. Charles Cox, State 4-H Program Leader, 205 4-H Youth Development Building,  
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078-6063, Phone: 405-744-8885  
Fax: 405-744-6522, Email: [ccox@okstate.edu](mailto:ccox@okstate.edu)  
Dr. Scott Carter, OSU Animal Science Professor, Swine  
Dr. Fred Ray, OSU Extension Animal Foods Specialist

**Base Programs:**

4-H Youth Development  
Agriculture

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*South Carolina*

## **Children, Youth and Families At Risk (CYFAR) Drug-Free Community Program**

**Situation:**

The low-income, South Sumter CYFAR 4-H youth and adult group identified drugs as a major problem that needed attention within their designated Empowerment Zone community.



**Program Description:**

4-H Youth and adults have worked together as partners throughout the CYFAR development process. Together they formed a vision and a set of goals. One of those goals is, "Everyone living in the South Sumter community will live and raise families in a safe, caring, drug-free, nonviolent environment."

To help achieve this goal youth and adults participated in community National Issues Forums, moderated by the CYFAR 4-H Youth Development agent. Also, several youth were trained to moderate forums and they moderated several youth-only forums. Additionally, 4-H youth and adults jointly organized and participated in a Drug March through the drug-infested areas of their neighborhood, held in June on Join Hand's Day. Some 450 people (youth and adults) participated, and the 4-H youth and adult organizers won one of twenty national Excellence Awards given by America's Fraternal Benefit Society, Points of Light Foundation, and the Volunteer Center National Network.

Based on the input the youth and adults gathered from these public efforts they met with researchers from the Institute of Family and Neighborhood Life (IFNL) at Clemson to put together a Drug-Free Community grant based on research and program best practices. The youth and adult citizens, along with IFNL researchers, identified the following components as part of the proposed project: family "chat" sessions, youth arts programs, more National Issues Forums, and the development of a 4-H youth council that will work, along with Clemson media professionals, to develop media messages aimed at other youth to combat youth involvement with drugs. Four of these 4-Hers were part of the development of a statewide television commercial, coordinated by the South Carolina Department of Health, to combat youth smoking. The Drug-Free project also includes an outreach worker to contact youth that are homeless or walking the streets and to try to help them get the assistance they may need or get them involved in positive activities like 4-H Clubs. The \$99,420 drug grant was awarded in 2002 and the second year's funding has already been designated. (It is thought this grant will last for five years.)

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

The county agent with responsibility of the CYFAR grant devotes 80% (.8FTE) of her time to the entire CYFAR project. Her support of this effort as part of her work with CYFAR is only a portion of this total commitment. She also has 5% (.05 FTE) of her time designated to support the drug-free grant specifically. Three research staff from the Institute of Family and Neighborhood Life devote a total of 45% (.45FTE) of their time to support the Drug-Free grant. The target audience (youth and adults) is and has been involved with the project continually, from the development stages through the implementation stages. Additionally, the low-income, 28 year old chairperson of the CYFAR community action committee was hired, through the Drug-Free grant, to work full time as an Executive Director of the South Sumter Citizens' Coalition to coordinate the Drug-Free Community grant and to continue to empower the community. She also serves as one of the 4-H leaders in the community.

A program strength is that it is integrated into the total CYFAR project and is built on research and best program practices. The partnership with extension personnel, university researches and community youth and adults, laid the groundwork, developed and which will implement this ongoing project, is a strength. The involvement of Clemson IFNL researchers insured the

appropriateness of the educational activities undertaken – youth leadership, youth arts, and youth involved in creating media messaged. People in the community already see progress and are commenting on their satisfaction of the program.

**Accomplishments and Impacts:**

As reported in the first year's progress report, significant progress has been made toward the accomplishments of the Drug-Free project objectives. It was noted that within the first month of employment, the outreach worker contacted 95 individuals on the streets that filled out a personal-needs survey. Several of these contacted participated in family chat sessions, and the initial 4-H leadership training provided to potential 4-H Drug-Free Community youth-council members. (Local Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission professionals, the 4-H Leadership Extension Specialist and one of the IFNL researchers conducted this training.)

Also, one street youth was helped to achieve their GED. Also, one single parent families' residential conditions were dramatically improved, the children were saved from being removed from the home by social services, and the parent enrolled in the Extension Service Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). Additionally, the youth enrolled in the 4-H Youth Arts program. More quantitative data is in the process of being gathered. (4-H youth and community adult volunteers, using an "Empowerment Evaluation" approach will gather Data.) Clemson's review committee has only recently approved the evaluation tools, developed by the researchers of the IFNL.

**Resource Commitment:**

A \$99,420 Drug-Free Community grant funded by the Office of National Drug Control Policy and the Department of Justice was secured for 2002. An additional commitment of \$99,400 has already been made for 2003. It is anticipated that another \$298,200 will be forthcoming over the next three years. Miscellaneous contributions from community businesses have also been provided to this project.

**Collaborators:**

Local extension staff included the 4-H Coordinator, the CYFAR Coordinator, 4-H Volunteer Coordinator, and the EFNEP Program Assistant. The 4-H Leadership Extension Specialist and three researches from the IFNL at Clemson University helped. Numerous local agencies serve on the youth and adult coalition and have helped provide specific resources. Major agency contributors are the Sumter Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, the Greenhouse Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter, the South Sumter Resource Center, and the Free Arts Studio.

**Contact Person(s):**

Barbara A. Brown, County Extension Agent / CYFAR Coordinator, Sumter County, Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service (CUES), 5<sup>th</sup> floor, 115N Harvin St, Sumter, SC 29151. Robin Kimbrough-Melton, Research-Associate / Professor, IFNL, 158 P& A Center, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634. **Phone:** Sumter County CUCES 803-773-5561, IFNL 864-656-6271. **Fax:** CUCES 803-773-0070, IFNL 864-656-6281, **Email:** CUCES [babrwn@clemson.edu](mailto:babrwn@clemson.edu), IFNL [rkimbro@clemson.edu](mailto:rkimbro@clemson.edu)

**Base Program Areas to which this program applies:**

*Washington*

## **Livestock Quality Assurance for 4-H Youth**

### **Situation:**

Consumers desire humanely produced, safe, high quality food. The 1991 and 1995 Beef Quality Audits showed that beef producers lost an average of \$200 per market animal because the product did not conform to consumer's desires for quality. Pork and lamb producers also lost money due to nonconformance of their product. Youth (4-H and FFA) account for 1.9% of the total national production of beef, lamb and pork. Therefore, production by youth producers becomes an important part of the nation's production. To educate our youth producers Washington State's first step was to develop a quality assurance curriculum "Assuring Animal Quality by Youth Producers," and the state has educated Extension Agents, Ag Teachers, and volunteers to use the curriculum with youth. However, we have not had empirical data that shows effectiveness of the education effort.

### **Program Description:**

A team of Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) veterinarians, Extension animal scientists, and an Extension 4-H Youth Specialist developed a program that included quality assurance education and a state wide survey to determine the current knowledge and attitudes about livestock quality assurance by youth and adult producers. The survey would indicate additional steps that would need to be taken of the Department of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension in Washington State.

### **Stakeholder Satisfaction:**

More than 6,000 youth with the coaching of 37 Extension Professionals in Washington have been exposed to quality assurance education with the input 0.5 FTE of Extension Specialist's time. All 39 counties in Washington State require that youth who exhibit animals at the fair sign an Exhibitor Code of Ethics. This document requires members, parents, and leaders to sign-off that the members have taken responsibility for the proper care and treatment of their animals, the production of wholesome food, and the development of sound ethical behavior in themselves and others. In addition, 2,000 youth and adult livestock producers in Washington participated in a survey to determine their knowledge of quality assurance educational programs. Northwest meat packers were extremely supportive of requiring youth producers to have an animal health record. In fact, one northwest packer would not have accepted 400 animals from one show, if the show had not had an animal health record on each of the 400 animals presented to the processor.

### **Accomplishments and Impacts:**

The 2001 Cooperative Extension and WSDA Food Safety Quality Assurance Survey indicated continued training would be needed for both adult and youth producers on the impact production practices have on food safety issues. Youth and adult producers also need to be provided carcass information to make better selection decisions to be based on the genetic potential to produce offspring that will be more correctly finished, lean, and produce high quality animal products. It

was found that youth producers must also learn that there are economic incentives, as well as moral and ethical responsibilities, to humanely produce wholesome, high quality food products for consumers. As a direct result of the survey a ground breaking regional (Washington, Oregon, and Idaho) youth and adult livestock field day was established that involved 225 youth and their youth leaders. The participants increased their skills and knowledge of livestock production.

Animal Health Records for five different species were developed for 4-H and FFA youth producers. The records document animal health products and medicated feeds used and certified that no prohibited proteins were fed during the production of their market animal projects. This practice change requires they read and understand both drug and feed labels to ensure they are producing healthy, safe animal products for consumers. These records are in use in all the major junior livestock shows in the state including the Livestock Show of Spokane that involves 691 youth and adults from Washington, Idaho, and Montana. The national livestock commodity organizations and all the major Pacific Northwest packing plants have helped to ensure the use of the records.

Four hundred thirteen adult and youth livestock producers attended four educational programs. They developed a basic understanding of performance evaluation, quality assurance, and USDA quality and yield grading. Using this information breeders and exhibitors are able to improve the selection, feeding, and management of their animals. These changes have improved the marketability of feeder animals to youth exhibitors and finished market animals to meat processors. These changes have also resulted in animal products that more closely meet consumer demands, with significantly higher quality grades than the average show animal.

**Resources Commitment:**

Grants and donations: \$28,185

**Collaborators:**

Cooperators in industry organizations, Washington State Department of Agriculture, USDA/FSIS, WSU Field, Washington Department of Agriculture, Washington Pork Producers, Washington Sheep Producers, Washington Cattleman, and Northwest Meat Packers.

**Contact Person:**

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**Base program areas to which this program applies:**

4-H Youth Development  
Agriculture and  
Nutrition, Diet and Health.

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